278 of trust. Every time they take a caravan down south, they purchase [439] many drugs, either for their personal use or to resell in their country or at In-Salah.

164 There are not many diseases in the Ahaggar. The country is relatively healthy because of its very dry climate /261/ and the bracing action of the sun, which at the same time destroys microbic germs. Moreover, this is very fortunate, for with the small amount of hygiene practiced by the Tuareg it would be impossible to fight disease. It may also be true that this absence of hygiene stems from the fact that the Tuareg have not had to see the necessity of it.

[165 731] The Ahaggar people die of old age or of war wounds. Of course, there are sometimes epidemics capable of doing damage, but they are rare because of the isolation of the camps. The great distances which separate one from the other are a natural defense against mass contagions. These epidemics always come through the medium [361] of the caravaneers or the people who return from the Sudan, where they have stayed among sedentary people. We may mention smallpox, very common in the Sudan, which sometimes works great ravages in the tribes. Typhus, spread by lice, may decimate a whole tribe in a few days, and it is not uncommon among the Tuareg. But these two diseases are the exception when they are reported in [151] the Ahaggar. When a man returning from the Sudan is stricken with one of them, his case is reported by messengers long before his arrival, and the sick man is systematically isolated.

753 The Tuareg under the circumstances recognize the state of [771] contagion, but they do not see the causes of disease. According to them, it is caused by the action of bad genii. As good Moslems, they pretend not to believe in these genii, but in reality most of the talismans they wear on their persons are intended to protect them from these. To obtain them, they go to the marabouts or to men [156] with a reputation for their knowledge of the occult sciences; these sorcerers are known as amekelléou.

161 /108 cont./ cited above). The birth rate is not very high, but it is greater than the low death rate. Infant mortality is practically impossible to verify.

162 In 1948 there were 1, 028 men counted for 1, 202 women, which would seem tosupport the widespread opinion that relative to other peoples there are more men than women among the Tuareg. One must be careful, however, not to make this type of affirmation without having previously examined all the causes that may produce such a state of affairs. It is almost certain that the Tuareg control their birth rate. The 162 chief of the tribe may forbid births or may recommend them 847 according to the number of members of the tribe. This measure seems wise in a country which can scarcely support the existing population. The situation is such as it would be if the Tuareg had found, empirically, the ideal number of individuals able to be supported by their soil and were wise enough to try to maintain this number.

The men interrogated on this subject avoided the question, saying that this concerns their women and that they do not know the methods employed. The women are equally reticent, not to say mute.

/109/ Some of them claim to abort by drinking decoctions of plants. The French doctors know the qualities of these plants and think that this medication would be insufficient to produce the desired effect. By being patient, I was able to learn a method which, although dangerous, should be effective; I got this information from only one woman and have never been able to confirm it, as it is difficult to touch on these subjects directly. The women supposedly use a probe that they make from a "stone" called "azarif" ("cheb" in Arabic), which is of alum; they make this the size of a slate pencil. 162 This probe dissolves after having produced a mechanical effect. 165 It is likely that many women fall victim to these maneuvers, 847 for in questioning the Tuareg one discovers a rather high female mortality rate at a relatively young age. Perhaps we may see

162 /109 cont./ here the cause of the greater proportion of men
165 to women.
847 The most widespread disease in the Ahaggar is undoubted-
164 ly malaria, most often contracted in Sudanese territory and spread in the Ahaggar, where anopheles are numerous in the agricultural centers and at all the permanent or temporary water points. Professor Rémy of the faculty at Nancy has found them in the Tarahouaout tiggert /outflow of water/, at the In-Ezzebib guelta /pool/; the doctor, Captain Galan, has collected them in the Afilal guelta at an altitude of nearly 2, 000 meters.

Pneumonia and its pulmonary complications wreak the most havoc among the Tuareg; this is due to the winter cold, which is ill borne in too thin clothes.

[131] In 1949 an epidemic of measles took on the aspect of a catastrophe through its pulmonary consequences.

Venereal diseases are very common among the harratin, rarer among the Tuareg.

A distressing disease of the agricultural centers is trachoma, aggravated by every type of conjunctivitis transmitted by the flies that swarm and cluster around the /110/ eyes of children. The Tuareg seem immune to diseases of the eyes; they rarely have trachoma.

Smallpox, once so common and so feared, has practically disappeared, thanks to systematic vaccination. It was an unusual event to see two Tuareg return from the Sudan in April, 1951 covered with smallpox eruptions.

Tuberculosis does not seem to have appeared; skin tests made at the Tamanrasset school are negative for children born in the Ahaggar. There seems to be no manifestation of cancer.

Although the Tuareg are abundantly provided with lice, above all in the winter, as are the harratin, a case of typhus has never been known. Typhoid is unknown, as are diphtheria, tetanus, and poliomyelitis.